Beyond Illusion

All authentic occult Ways bring enlightenment - that is, they bring a living apprehension of the cosmos as a unified Being, and the purpose of individual existence in accord with that Being.
The Path aims to bring this apprehension via its various Grade rituals, ordeals and tasks. These experiences, as has been written many times, gradually expand individual consciousness into acausality. The Initiate, if they are honest with themselves, will know what experiences are necessary in order to bring an internal balance, and so enable progress along the Way.

However, these various ordeals do not in themselves produce enlightenment. In understanding this, an Initiate of the Way must cease to view the ordeals as forms of conventional "Occultism"; that is, as isolated rituals which supposedly provide "quick fix" results, and an instant attainment of some grand occult title. The ordeals must be understood as ways and means to enlightenment only within the context of the whole journey, from "novice" to "immortal".

In particular, each Grade ritual is a rite of consolidation, a method to distill the wisdom from the previous tasks and ordeals (such as an "Insight Role"). For example, the Grade ritual of External Adept, by its very nature, provides the conditions necessary to reflect upon the previous stage of Initiate, and to thus allow a process of understanding to occur unhindered. This understanding, produced by the conditions of the rite and derived from the experiences which have led up to it, is the quintessence of each Grade ritual.

By allowing this consolidation, via a method which fulfils such criteria, character and creativity is deepened and further evolved, and thus the next stage of the Way is made possible. This next stage signifies the practical implementing of this "further evolving" in the real world.

This process is particularly demonstrated by the Grade Ritual of Internal Adept. The conditions of long isolation and silence enable, really for the first time, genuine understanding of the Way as previously and uniquely experienced by the prospective Adept. This understanding occurs of itself, because the prospective Adept has ceased the practical, dynamic life of experience that was previously required.

Thus, the rite of Internal Adept only produces enlightenment when a sufficient amount of experiencing has occurred. The ritual may be undertaken at any time, but may not produce what it is designed to produce if the time is not ready for its undertaking: this is to say that enlightenment does not merely result from spending a minimum amount of three months

living isolated in the wilderness. It is easy to become enchanted with the "glamour" and challenge of the image of that particular rite: but the outward form is only surface and meaningless if undertaken simply for its own sake.

The prospective Adept therefore will come to an intuitive understanding of the essence of that ritual beyond its appearance, within a time-frame unique to their own development. When that intuitive understanding occurs - and the individual will know when it does - then all the conditions, esoteric and exoteric, are present for a genuine, successful undertaking. Any attempts prior to that point of intuitive understanding implies that the ritual is being undertaken for the wrong reasons, and will end in failure.

One such reason is to see the rite of Internal Adept as an escape from/ solution to personal problems or circumstances - and for those subjected to the pressures and sicknesses of modern urban life (or the culture of the "real world" in general), the allure of living as the archetypal Hermit is understandably very strong.But the ritual does not in itself constitute a new way of life although it does give, perhaps incidentally, a glimpse of the beginnings of such a way; and if such a new way is desired, then it must be discovered and created prior to or following the ritual itself. (Conversely, an established, productive and "happy" life can produce excuses not to undertake the ritual.)

Following completion of the Internal Adept rite, the new Adept returns to the world and begins to implement their Destiny, of which they are now conscious. The tasks then required are devised by the Adept themselves, in accord with that Destiny. Only when (and if) the primary goals of that Destiny are achieved, can the next stage of Master/Mistress occur

Where the various other tasks are concerned, such as those listed in Hostia, the Initiate is occassionally led into these by the individual who is acting as their guide. Sometimes such tasks are not undertaken altogether willingly, but are experienced because the advice of the guide - someone who has travelled further along the Way - is trusted and accepted. Such tasks harden personal character, provide greater insight into oneself and the world, and further refine a sinister focus and understanding. Such a focus/purpose/sense of Destiny, enables judgement and the endurance to see that judgement through.

As for the Grade rituals - at least beyond the Grade of External Adept - the Initiate must themselves learn to wait and watch for the right time and trust, amidst the alchemy of other tasks, that such a time will arrive, to thus be acted upon, using their own initiative. This time does not stay, but is as a gate that will open and then begin to slowly close, until the opportunity is lost. In this - as in all other aspects - self-honesty is the fundamental requirement of anyone who seriously aspires towards the ultimate goal of wisdom.

To conclude: an Intitiate should ask themselves the following questions. What really is the purpose, for the individual and beyond, of each Grade ritual? Is such an ordeal undertaken because of the glamour and promise of its "image"? Is the ritual to be manipulated for personal ends, or are there larger forces involved to which the individual must learn to listen? If there is a larger force, what is it and how is the individual to listen? In so answering, there is no point in simply regurgitating the expected ONA theory; one must answer according to how one feels.

A real Adept knows the answers

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